

Transcribed by Kathleen Irving, March 2001

[Note: This is a meeting of the Uintah Historical Society, 13 November 1982. Stella Richards is narrating this program, which is based on her works. She wrote pageants for Uintah Basin Industrial Conventions and other community functions. She also self-published several works of prose and poetry. In 1982 Stella was 91 years old.

A song is first recorded on the tape, then the following poem is recited by an unidentified woman. The lyrics of the song are not completely intelligible.

### Uintah My Homeland

Uintah, my homeland, glorious to me,  
It's the home of many races, I'm sure you'll agree.  
Relics are found in so many places,  
On mountain or hillside or wide open spaces.  
Relics are found in so many places,  
Hieroglyphics on canyon walls and in caves.  
Human bones found in crevices of rocks and ancient graves.  
Curious dwellings found in many locations,  
Scientists seek the origin of these ancient nations.

Uintah, my homeland, beautiful and free,  
Land of marvelous changes, I'm sure you'll agree.  
The geological history of untold ages  
Are recorded in Uintah's rockbound pages.  
Lofty mountains raise their towering peaks  
Where gorges and canyons are carved by rivers and creeks.  
Volcanoes erupted, but their craters sleep  
Beneath beautiful lakes, wide, blue and deep.

Uintah, the homeland of so many races,  
Campgrounds and relics found in curious places—  
In caves, on cliffs, in valley or mountainside,  
In forests, by rivers, or in canyons wide.  
In digging Vernal's first sewer five skeletons were found  
Just a few feet 'neath the street's level ground.  
Ancient ditches and canals give us a clue  
Agriculture in Uintah is not very new.  
Indian pictures abound near many campgrounds,  
Where seed corn, squash and beans were found  
In pottery, earthen jars and baskets of bark,  
Sometimes in caves, silent and dark.

Oh, this homeland of mine where knowledge I find  
Of the wonders of the past!  
Will I ever learn at last  
Where the first race of mankind  
This wonderful homeland did find?

Song: Lyrics aren't clear, baby squealing in background.

Stella: Next we are going to have a presentation of Indians today and the Indians yesterday. We're going to have Indian legends and history that I think very, very few people know anything about. Our first narrator will be Tom Wilhelm. Following him, Linda Carnegie.

Tom Wilhelm: We, the Red Men, are the extension bridge between modern and ancient histories. We are keepers of sacred legends, dances, customs and religious rites. Our cultures go back to magnificent cities, pyramids, temples, and lookout towers. Many of our ancient canals and reservoir systems have been uncovered and are being used today. The Great White God visited many tribes and we became a united and industrious people until Cortez, the cruel Spaniard, with several hundred soldiers and many guns and firearms. Through trickery, bribes, he turned Indian tribe against Indian tribe, brother against brother, until 15,000 Indians were slaughtered. Cortez took Montezuma, the ruler of many nations and king, captive. A large room full of gold was given as ransom, but Montezuma was murdered. Then Cortez, the destroyer, became our ruler and terror.

We, the Red Men, were brought down to ? and degradation, but through the long, dark years we still hold our sacred legends, religious rites, and sacred dances of our ancestry. We are the first Americans. Winter evenings, our legends are told around campfires. We want our young braves to realize the ancestral threads that run through all Indian tribes and bind them together. A great Apache war chief once said, "Our legends are a sacred book for the Apache and all Indians." A great Navajo chief once declared, "These legends are our book. Write them in beauty as I have told them to you."

The Great White God is known by many names, according to the tribes and their locality: Quetzalcoatl, Waka, Lord of the Wind and Water, the Healer, the Prophet, the Great Spirit, the Fair God. Through the ages, we, the Red Men, have honored the Great God in our religious dances. Today white men's educators and scientists are beginning to acknowledge our former greatness. Bancroft, the great American historian, declares, "You cannot find a tribe of Indians anywhere in the Americas that does not have a legend among their people of a Great White God or who was the son of the Great White God, who lived with their ancient people and taught them his beautiful gospel."

Lord Kingsbury, a scientist from England says, "Long ago the ? tribes were among a possession book handed down from father to son, but now that book has perished in the ground where its guardian is buried." When Kingsbury visited other tribes far out in the jungles, he tells of the Orchid Manuscript, found in the jungles under centuries of debris. It gives the story of Moses calling down the plagues on the Egyptians. These people must have belonged to the Hebrews. Kingsbury also says, "I cannot fail to remark why I believe these people descended from Hebrews. They know all the Bible stories."

Historian Bancroft says, "I talked with an old Indian called Patriarch. He lived many

miles out in the deep jungle. My Indian guide said, 'Tell him the story about the gold bible.' Bancroft told the story of the ancestors as told in the gold bible. When Bancroft came to the part where the story told about Christ coming out of the heavens after the great destruction of the cities and the people, the old Indian, with tears running down his cheeks, said, 'Yes, that's true. That is correct.'

Applause.

Linda Carnegie:

Little by little we are beginning to know  
Things that counted long, long ago.  
Educators and scientists are beginning to achieve  
Knowledge and truth we once couldn't believe.  
We thought ancient Red Men were cruel and wild,  
Today we find they were enlightened and mild.

A great parable happened to them long ago,  
It changed their lives completely and so  
We find them building temples great and grand,  
Pyramids and lookout towers throughout the land.  
They buried the hatchet, knew war no more.  
Why? The great white god opened a new door  
Of peace and goodwill to every Indian tribe  
That would accept His teachings and His law to abide.

Before His crucifixion Jesus Christ declared,  
Other sheep have I that are not of this fold  
Them must I visit and bring them into the fold.  
Every tribe from North and South America and Mexico  
Declared the White God visited them long, long ago.  
From wild, mischievous, warlike tribes they became  
Industrious, peace-loving builders of ? and fame.

Today scientists and educators throughout the land  
Are beginning to make known their accomplishments we understand  
After years of study in college and universities,  
Tino Passen received both masters and doctor degrees.  
Then for twenty-five years, in his ever-changing abode,  
In tepees, in wigwams, hogans, pueblos. And there they were sowed  
Seeds of friendship, kindness, love and respect.  
In return he received knowledge he didn't expect.

There were legends and ceremonial dances and miracles galore,  
You'd think you were in Jerusalem, the Holy Land, once more.

Every tribe gave this fair god a special name:  
Quetzalcoatl, Wakeea, Lord of Wind and Water,  
The Prophet, The Healer, Arizona, and Tacoma.  
States, cities and mighty rivers today bear his name.  
Many of our words are almost the same,  
As when Indians used them long ago.  
Our word hurricane came from the Indian.  
The word “hur-ah-cahn”, hurahcahn,  
A great black cloud of whirling wind and rain  
Came sweeping over city and plain.  
The Indians were terrified, but the fair God rebuked  
The storms and sent them abroad.

Every tribe had its own miracles:  
From quenching a forest fire or a whole village would be turned to ashes  
To leading a tribe from a rocky, desert land  
To a land of fertility and prosperity grand.

The description of the white god and his teachings are always the same.  
Almost every temple and pyramid is decorated with a wriggling serpent  
With a feather on his head.  
A serpent is a strange design for a temple,  
But it's quite a symbol.  
To the Indian the wriggling serpent is a symbol of ocean waves  
And rolling waters of a mighty river.  
The feather is the symbol of the plume of the condor, the sacred bird.  
It represents wind, wind and water,  
The lifeblood of all living things.  
The temple is for Fair God's house,  
He is the life and light of all.  
Quetzalcoatl means Lord of wind and water.  
Many times he here demonstrated his power over men,  
He rebuked the hurricanes and the raging floods.

All the peace, the industry, the beauty of the grand men ceased,  
When the haughty Spanish white man Cortez, his soldiers increased, arrived.  
By war, trickery and robbery they turned tribe against tribe, brother against brother.  
The peaceful nations became bitter enemies and the Indians were slaughtered.  
Cities were burned, all records destroyed, the bulk of the Indian nations  
Were taken by ship abroad to Spain.  
We may not present Indian legends, stories of the White God, among the Red Men.

Stella: The following legend comes from Peru, by Renee Barton.

Renee Barton: To save time this legend has been greatly condensed. A Mr. Taylor Hansen was

introduced to a Jawaka Indian, a native of Peru, and was told this story.  
The great prophet came to Caracus in Peru. His coming was announced.

End

[Ed. Note: The following is a copy of the poem Uintah, My Homeland from Stella Richards' self-published book Uintah Basin History: Utah's Eastern Empire, which was published in 1987. It is similar to, but more in-depth than the first poem included in this history.]

### Uintah My Homeland

Uintah, my homeland glorious to me,  
It's been the home of other nations I'm sure you'll agree.  
Their relics are found in so many places,  
Ancient dwellings, hieroglyphics in caves or in wide canyon pages.  
Scientists have found them in many locations.  
They wonder at the origin of ancient nations.

Uintah my homeland glorious, free  
Land of delightful changes I'm sure you'll agree.  
The geological history of untold ages  
Are written in Earth's rockbound pages.  
Lofty mountains raise their towering peaks  
Where gorges and canyons are carved by river and creeks  
Volcanoes erupted but their craters sleep  
'Neath beautiful lakes wide and deep.

Dinosaurs and huge animals roamed over mountain and plain  
Earth's vegetation was lush because of much rain.  
Glaciers gouged great lakes scientists agree,  
The result of their work you may plainly see.  
Fossils of fish, sea animals and oyster shell,  
Each have a fascinating story to tell  
Of how over Uintah the ocean once rolled  
Revealing Earth's history, its secrets unfold.

Uintah homeland of many races  
There's remains of dwellings in so many places.  
In caves, cliff dwellings or on level ground  
In many places human skeletons are found.  
Ancient canals and ditches give us a clue,  
The practice of agriculture is not new.

Hieroglyphics abound near many campgrounds

In pottery, earthen jars or baskets of bark,  
And smoke made the walls of the caves quite dark.  
Oh, this homeland of mine for a knowledge I pine  
Of the wonders of the past will I learn at last  
The secrets sublime of that ancient time  
When the race of mankind our homeland did find.

Who can doubt that tropical trees in Uintah grew  
When nature's rock pages are open to view  
Revealing the secrets of bygone ages  
Taken direct from the Earth's closed pages.  
Lake Uintah extended from Rifle, Colorado  
To Hanna, Utah, knows this and more:  
Uintah Mountain was its northern shore,  
While Green River City was its southern door.  
One hundred ninety miles long, a hundred twenty wide  
We point to this ancient lake with pride.

The three-toed horse roamed the Devil's Playground.  
Just south of Vernal their bones were found.  
And an animal that carried six horns on his nose  
Was always prepared to meet his foes.  
Remains of mammals, huge, medium and small  
Have been found by those who answered the call  
To rove o'er these waste lands far and wide  
Many a relic they display with pride.

Underground lakes of dark murky oil  
Are found far beneath Uintah's topsoil.  
From organic remains, oil lakes were made  
In layers of Weber and tertiary sands they are laid.  
God knows all the answers and sometimes he  
May teach us more of Uintah geography.

Then an ice age covered mountain, valley and plain  
As blizzards swept down again and again.  
The climate changes to ice and snow  
Huge glaciers in Uinta mountains grow.  
These mountains of ice carved canyons wide,  
They gouged and scraped on every side,  
And finishing their work, they melted away,  
Preparing the Earth for a greater day.

How grand the scenery Mother Nature makes.  
Now come with me to a Thousand lakes.

Made by melting glaciers, ice and snow,  
To Uintah scenic wonderland of the west.  
Uintah, the land that God has blessed.  
Uintah, with underground wealth untold  
With majestic rivers and grain fields of gold  
With cities and highways, valleys and plains  
And extensive forests on her mountain chains.  
Uintah is the homeland for you and me  
Where once rolled billows of a great island sea.

In ancient days of long ago  
Indian tribes roved to and fro.  
They rode their pinto ponies small,  
The braves were strong, warlike and tall.  
They roamed o'er mountain, desert, plain  
Hunting in heat, cold, sunshine, rain.  
They killed buffalo, bear and deer.  
They fished lakes and streams far and near  
Their homes were just a tepee small  
Often near stream or waterfall.

Curious customs these Indians had  
Many were good, but others were bad.  
They always killed a baby girl twin  
Good luck or Great Spirit's favor to win.  
Some buried their dead in a lonely cave  
Or a crevice of rock was used for a grave.  
Sometimes in the top of a tall pine tree  
The Indians hung their dead, where all could see,  
Wrapped in a blanket strong and red.  
A strange place for Indians to put their dead.  
But well they knew magpies and crows were afraid to go  
Near such a bright color in sunshine or snow.  
When the dead became mummies, dry as leather,  
They were taken down from inclement weather.  
The horse, blanket, food, bow and arrow  
Were placed near the grave for use on the morrow  
When the Indian rides in the Happy Hunting Ground  
Where his soul rests in peace and he's safe and sound.

The Indian children are happy and gay.  
They wander near stream or woodland to play.  
In early spring the tribes meet together  
To thank Great Spirit for the fine warm weather,  
For protection through months of ice and snow,

For the time when plants begin to grow.

A huge bear's head is raised on a pole.  
Winter is o'er, the bear comes out of his hole.  
Now to get a squaw is the young buck's goal.  
Many new homes result from these dances.  
The braves can't resist the shy maidens' glances.  
Three days and nights and the Bear Dance is done  
At their tribal dances, the Indians have fun.

Now Father Escalante in 1776  
Found himself in pretty bad fix.  
While Washington was fighting the Revolutionary War,  
Escalante, Domingez and half a score  
Set out from the city of Sante Fe  
To find a shorter route to Old Monterey.  
They traversed canyons deep and wide.  
Two days they camped where Green River glides  
Through Split Mountain Canyon, opposite the Jensen side.  
They carved name and date on a cottonwood tree  
Between Ouray and Jensen, which you still may see.  
On they went to Utah Lake  
Where they taught the Utes for Christ's sweet sake.  
But the snows came early and fell so deep  
They lost their way in Sierra Mountains steep.  
So, they cast lots and to God they pray  
Asking the best way back to Santa Fe.

After Escalante came Spaniards galore  
Buying Indian papooses and squaws by the score.  
The bucks received ponies, firewater and knives  
While the Spaniards bought slaves and sold them for wives.  
Fort Robidoux near Whiterocks was the slave trading center  
Where renegades of every nationality could enter.  
In Utah this slave trade flourished one hundred years.  
Think of the grief, the sorrow, the tears.  
Think of little papooses and squaws filled with terror  
Until pioneers came and taught them the error  
Of slave trade and the use of firewater.

Brigham Young counseled the braves  
Taught the chiefs to do better  
Then had a law passed in United States Congress  
That put an end to the slave trading process.



In 1872 William Ashley and a chosen few  
Left St. Louis to be trappers and fur traders, too.  
They became adventurers of great renown,  
Leaving their names on river, mountain and town.  
There where Jackson, Green, Henry and William Ashley,  
Who left his name on both Ashley Creek and Valley.  
The whole Uintah Basin they explore  
Following animal trails, listening to Indian lore.

Now a cache and a rendezvous we wish you to see  
In Flaming Gorge Canyon, north of Ashley Valley.  
A most romantic, colorful sight to behold,  
Here come trappers, fur traders, adventurers bold.  
Spaniards, Utes, Piutes, Shoshone and Ouray  
It's as colorful as sun.  
All this prepared the way for our great pioneer  
To Uintah – our homeland, our country so dear.